

REMARKS

This communication is in response to the Office Action dated June 27, 2008. In the Office Action, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 14-25 were pending and rejected. With this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 14, 15, 17 and 18 are amended; claims 20, 24 and 25 are canceled; and the remaining claims are unchanged in the application.

Section Five of the Office Action set forth a claim objection with respect to claim 15 and suggested that claim 15 be dependent upon claim 14. Claim 15 has been so amended. Applicants respectfully submit that the claim objection set forth in Section Five of the Office Action may now be withdrawn.

Section Seven of the Office Action indicated that claims 14-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. With respect to this rejection, the Office Action asserted that it is unclear from claim 14 what result occurs if a context word does not exist. Moreover, the Office Action indicated that the claim limitation denotes the context word existing if such word exists. Applicants have amended dependent claim 14 to remove the language "if such word exists." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully believe that amended dependent claim 14 is fully compliant with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 15-20 as being dependent upon an indefinite base claim has also been overcome.

Section Nine of the Office Action also indicated that claims 17-20 included language for which there was insufficient antecedent basis. Claims 17 and 18 have been amended to remedy the concern of Section Nine of the Office Action and claim 20 has been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims currently pending in this application are in proper form for allowance.

Section Eleven of the Office Action indicated that claims 1, 4, and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Nassiff et al. (U.S. Patent No.

6,418,410 – hereinafter “Nassiff”). Of those claims, claims 1 and 7 are independent. With respect to this rejection, the Office Action asserted that Nassiff’s “use of a statistical quantity with the updating of a language model implies that a probability value is associated with a word when comparisons are made (see col. 6, lines 28-31).” Respectfully, the Office Action misunderstands the claim language. The claim language does not say a probability value associated with a word as recited in Section Eleven of the Office Action, but instead recites a probability associated with an existing pronunciation. A word and a pronunciation are different. This distinction is both apparent from the Nassiff reference and from Applicant’s specification. Specifically, Nassiff provides, in column 6, lines 28-33, “As is known by those skilled in the art, it should be understood that the language model consists of statistical information about word patterns. Accordingly, correcting the language model is not an acoustic correction, but a statistical correction.” As set forth on page 21 of Applicant’s specification, “In this case, the word pair and/or phrase is added into the lexicon or the language model score associated with the corrected text is updated to boost the chance that the words are connected.” In that same paragraph, lines 21-24 provide, “Besides adding word pairs and/or phrases, the probability of the newly observed known pronunciation might also be increased if the system supports it.” (Emphasis added) It is this latter feature that is set forth in independent claims 1 and 7. In order to further distinguish those claims from the language model adjustment of Nassiff, independent claims 1 and 7 have been amended to recite, “increasing” a probability associated with an existing pronunciation. Applicants respectfully submit that this is neither taught nor suggested by Nassiff. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is not present in the various other references that are used in various combinations to reject the remaining claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1 and 7 are allowable over Nassiff. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims which depend from amended independent claims 1 and 7 are similarly allowable by virtue of their dependency, either directly or indirectly, from those allowable claims.

The other remaining independent claim is claim 24, which has been canceled along with its dependent claim 25. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been overcome.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the entire application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTMAN, CHAMPLIN & KELLY, P.A.

By: 

Christopher R. Christenson, Reg. No. 42,413
900 Second Avenue South, Suite 1400
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-3319
Phone: (612) 334-3222 Fax: (612) 334-3312

CRC:lah